

Remember:

Don't stop eating fish – it is a good source of nutrition. Follow this guide to eat fish and be healthy.



For More Information

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A Woman's Guide To Eating Fish Safely



Special Advice for Pregnant
Women & Young Children



Fish are nutritious and good for you. However, you should eat less of some fish that contain chemicals that can harm your baby's growth.

If You Are:

- ◆ Pregnant
- ◆ A woman who could become pregnant
- ◆ A nursing mother
- ◆ A child under six years old

You Should:

- ⇒ Continue to eat fish as part of a healthy diet while following this advice.
- ⇒ Eat up to 2 fish meals a week.
- ⇒ Select healthier fish from the market more often than others. (See Table # 1)
- ⇒ **Not eat swordfish, shark or tuna sushi**
- ⇒ For fish caught in Connecticut waters:
 - Eat no more than one meal per month of freshwater fish.
 - Do not eat striped bass or large bluefish from Long Island Sound.

Eating Supermarket & Restaurant Fish Safely

Many fish from the supermarket or restaurant are low in contaminants. Some fish are also high in good oils called omega-3 fatty acids. This nutrient enhances brain development and helps prevent heart disease. However, some fish can contain higher levels of contaminants, such as mercury.

Here are some “healthy” tips:

- ◆ Pregnant or nursing women and younger children should eat up to 2 fish meals a week.
- ◆ These meals should come from a variety of species, including canned tuna.
- ◆ When buying canned tuna, look for “light” tuna; it has less mercury than “white” tuna.
- ◆ Some very good species such as wild caught salmon are healthy to eat more than twice a week (see Table 1 with “hearts”).
- ⇒ **Certain fish such as swordfish, shark or tuna sushi should not be eaten.**

Guidelines for Eating Fish from the Market

This section can be removed and used as a handy reference when shopping

Use this chart to choose safer fish to eat.

Table 1

Eat 2 or More Meals a Week	Eat 1 Meal a Week
✓ Sardines & Anchovies ♥	☐ Tuna Steak
✓ Salmon (wild) ♥	☐ White Tuna (canned)
✓ Flounder & Fluke ♥	☐ Halibut
✓ Atlantic Mackerel ♥	☐ Catfish (farm-raised)
✓ Pollock ♥	☐ Red Snapper
✓ Sole ♥	Eat None of These
✓ Trout ♥	X Tuna Sushi
✓ Salmon (farm-raised)	X Swordfish
✓ Cod	X Shark
✓ Tilapia	X King Mackerel
✓ Haddock	X Striped Bass
✓ Light Tuna (canned)	X Bluefish
✓ Shellfish (oysters, shrimp, clams, scallops, lobster)	

♥ Species especially low in contaminants can be eaten more than twice a week.

Eating Locally Caught Fish Safely

Look for posted signs at fishing locations for consumption advice.

- ⇒ Follow the statewide freshwater advisory (no more than one meal per month) and specific "Do Not Eat" advice shown in Table #2 .
- ⇒ You can eat as much locally caught trout as you want that are under 15 inches long. **However, do not eat trout from the Housatonic River.**
- ⇒ Most saltwater fish from Long Island Sound are safe to eat, except striped bass and large bluefish.
- ⇒ When possible, eat smaller fish such as panfish (yellow perch, sunfish).



Which Locally Caught Fish Should I Avoid Eating?

Table 2

Pregnant women, women who could become pregnant, nursing mothers, and young children should **NOT** eat the following locally caught fish:

Long Island Sound and Connected Rivers
Bluefish over 25 inches and Striped Bass
Other fish from the Sound are OK to eat

Connecticut River Carp, Catfish	Versailles & Papermill Ponds (Sprague) All Species
Housatonic River Trout, Carp, Catfish, Bass, White Perch, Eels, Northern Pike	Union Pond, (Manchester) Bass, Carp, Catfish
Wyassup Lake, (Stonington) Bass, Pickerel	Dodge Pond, (East Lyme) Bass, Pickerel
Lake McDonough, (Barkhamstead) Bass, Pickerel	Silver Lake, (Meriden) Bass, Pickerel

Background on Contaminants

Certain locally caught and market fish contain elevated levels of mercury or PCBs.

- ⇒ At high enough levels, these chemicals can cause nerve and kidney damage, poor growth, and learning problems.
- ⇒ If you eat too much of these fish, your unborn baby may be harmed.
- ⇒ It is important for pregnant women, women who could become pregnant, and nursing mothers to follow this advice.



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